

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes \_\_\_\_\_  
no ☒

Property Name: Spiegel Farm Inventory Number: BA-3171  
Address: 9925 Bird River Road Historic district: yes ☒ no  
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21220 County: Baltimore County  
USGS Quadrangle(s): Middle River  
Property Owner: Norman J. and Shirley R. Spiegel Tax Account ID Number: 1519640820  
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 220 Tax Map Number: 82  
Project: Campbell Boulevard Extension Agency: Baltimore County Government  
Agency Prepared By: A.D. Marble & Company  
Preparer's Name: Stephanie Foell Date Prepared: 5/14/2004  
Documentation is presented in: Campbell Boulevard Extended

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended  
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*

Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_

Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible: yes Listed: yes

Site visit by MHT Staff yes ☒ no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Architectural Description

The farmstead at 9925 Bird River Road is comprised of a house and barn surrounded by approximately 60 acres of open fields. The buildings are reached by a long farm lane and are not visible from Bird River Road. The original orientation of the house appears to have been to the west, which faces Bird River Road. However, the residents now use the east elevation to gain entrance, and this elevation now serves as the principal façade of the building.

The residence was constructed in 1853. It is a two-story, cross-gable ell form with a rectangular footprint. The building sits atop a recently poured concrete foundation and is clad in asbestos siding. On the façade, a front-facing gable projects slightly from the ell and is on the same plane as an enclosed shed-roof porch. The entrance to the house is located on the enclosed porch. It is reached by way of a set of concrete steps and consists of a storm door topped by a gable-roof pediment which is situated just beneath the shed roof of the porch. Doors of a root cellar are located next to the concrete steps. Windows throughout the building are of various configurations. Original two-over-two, double-hung sash windows are interspersed with replacement six-over-one and multi-pane fixed windows.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility not recommended ☒

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments:

Jim T. Lawrence ✓  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

3/8/05  
Date

B. K. M. Tye  
Reviewer, National Register Program

3/11/05  
Date

200401864/200403920

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The rear elevation, which may have originally been the façade, is obscured greatly by vegetation. A single-story, full-width, hipped-roof porch spans the elevation.

The roof is covered with composite shingles. Two interior, brick chimneys are located on the ridge line.

The barn on the property appears to date to the early twentieth century, but some of its original materials have been replaced recently. It forms a rectangular footprint. The ground level of the barn is constructed of concrete blocks, while the upper portion is clad in vertical wood planks. A series of large double doors are located on the east elevation. Small windows punctuate the north and south elevations. The gable roof is covered in composite shingles.

#### History/Significance

##### General Regional History

The farm at 9925 Bird River Road is located in northeastern Baltimore County in the Middle River neighborhood. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, much of the area developed as a result of its proximity to Philadelphia Road, a major thoroughfare within the region. From the early years of settlement into the twentieth century, much of the land of this portion of Baltimore County was involved in small-scale farming. After World War II, the growing suburbanization of the Baltimore region reached Middle River and much of the farmland was subdivided into smaller lots. Many post-War neighborhoods containing small residences are concentrated in this part of Baltimore County.

##### Philadelphia Road

The area of Baltimore County that is now Rosedale developed largely as a result of its proximity to Philadelphia Road/Maryland Route 7, a road that originated as a Native American trail (Brooks and Rockel 1979:134). In 1729, the City of Baltimore was platted as a future port and commerce center. During that time, surveyors laid out the Philadelphia Road, linking Philadelphia, the New World's largest port city, with points south and west, including Baltimore.

The roadway's importance grew over time as interstate commerce became more prevalent. By the 1740s, commercial thoroughfares were being constructed to move farm produce, mill products, lime, and iron castings to the port city of Baltimore, and taverns and hotels sprang up along the Philadelphia Road. After several attempts to establish a turnpike, in 1814, the Baltimore and Havre de Grace Turnpike Company received a charter to construct a toll road on the bed of the Philadelphia Road. The turnpike company initially enjoyed a period of prosperity. However, after only 20 years, railroads began offering intense competition (Hollifield 1978:81-82).

As Baltimore continued its expansion eastward, portions of the turnpike were ceded to the city. In 1888, Harford County assumed control of the turnpike contained within its boundaries. The end of the turnpike came in 1894, when Baltimore County assumed control of the remaining roadway within its jurisdiction.

During the twentieth century, traffic continued to increase on Philadelphia Road, particularly when automobiles became prevalent. Businesses arose along the former turnpike to serve the traveling public and many thought the road would continue to be the favored route for those traveling between Philadelphia and points south. However, in the late 1930s, the state held discussions regarding Works Progress Administration funds available for highway construction. A decision was made either to improve the existing Philadelphia Road, by then designated as Maryland Route 7, or construct a new roadway parallel to the old one. The businesses along the existing route fought to retain their source of business, but constructing a new, parallel road became the final decision, and work commenced on the new road, the Pulaski Highway, which eventually replaced Philadelphia Road as the primary thoroughfare through the area.

#### MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

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Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

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MHT Comments:

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Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Agricultural Development in Eastern Baltimore County

European settlement of eastern Baltimore County likely began circa 1660. Because of the costly and complex land grant process, many wealthy landowners purchased parcels of land in Baltimore County, viewing these holdings as either investments in the future or potential bequests for heirs. Even land that had been purchased remained vacant (Marks 2000:7).

Consequently, during the early eighteenth century, land patterns consisted of small settlements, trails, and wilderness. Small-scale farmers, woodcutters, and miners were the primary residents, not the structured society of the southern Maryland gentry. This trend continued into later centuries as farmers continued to cultivate smaller plots of land than their Southern, plantation-owning counterparts (Marks 2000:11).

Middle River was originally part of an agricultural region. Generally, farms were small in size and produced relatively minor amounts of what were known as "stoop crops," vegetables which required bending over to harvest. These included carrots, parsnips, beans, etc. These crops were either sold at markets throughout Baltimore City (usually the Belair Market, the closest to the area) or by the farmers themselves, a practice known as truck farming, which was prevalent throughout the area.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, as greenhouses came into widespread use, the eastern portion of Baltimore County became an important center for the production of year-round cut flowers for weddings, funerals, and bouquets (McGrain 1990:17). The prominence of cut flowers during the Victorian era continued into the twentieth centuries, and many farms with related greenhouses in the Middle River, Perry Hall, and White Marsh areas were particularly important flower-production centers.

## Suburban Growth

Substantial suburban growth would not come to Middle River until the 1940s and 1950s. Following World War II, there was a housing shortage in the Baltimore area, and developers purchased many farms for housing developments. Returning war veterans took advantage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly called the G.I. Bill of Rights, which provided guarantees on home mortgages. Furthermore, Americans' growing reliance on the automobile allowed a massive residential shift away from Baltimore to the suburbs. This change is particularly evident in portions of Rosedale, where new streets were laid out and small Minimal Traditional-style residences, common in the post-War years, are plentiful. Residential growth in this locality began in the 1950s and continued steadily over the following decades, with 75 percent of the 1990 extant housing units constructed between 1950 and 1979.

Cape Cod and Minimal Traditional residences (which are not distinguished from each other by some scholars) are the consequence of the dire need for small residences in the years at the end of and directly following World War II. Quick, efficient, and affordable construction was of paramount importance, and the resulting houses display little architectural ornamentation. Commonly one or one-and-one-half stories, roofs are gabled and the eaves are usually close to the building (McAlester and McAlester 1984:477-478).

Beyond the boundaries of the current area of potential effect/study area, the greater Middle River area displays a similar lack of coherence, with turn-of-the century farmhouses intermingled with early-twentieth century bungalows and a strong majority of post-War Cape Cod and Minimal Traditional houses.

## Determination of Eligibility

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Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D Considerations: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ E \_\_\_ F \_\_\_ G

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Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Spiegel Farm

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The house at 9925 Bird River Road was constructed in 1853. The barn appears to date to the early twentieth century and was likely constructed for equipment storage. Both buildings have undergone substantial alterations to their original building materials.

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

The house and barn at 9925 Bird River Road are not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The property is not associated with any events in history that would make it eligible under Criterion A. Although the property obviously had agricultural associations, the lack of original outbuildings dating to the period of construction of the house greatly diminishes the ability of the site to convey its original agricultural function. Research into the property did not indicate that it was an important farm for the production of stoop crops or cut flowers, the two most significant agricultural harvests in this region of Baltimore County. Outbuildings such as greenhouses or sweet potato houses, which would indicate an association with these crops, are not present, and research did not uncover mentions of such buildings. No evidence, such as innovative outbuildings or field patterns, remains that would indicate that the farm significantly influenced agricultural practices in the area.

It is also not associated with any significant persons which would make it eligible under Criterion B. Research into the property and its owners did not indicate that anyone associated with it was connected with prominent persons or any farmers who practiced innovative agricultural techniques.

The house and barn have both undergone substantial alterations in their materials, and the design of the house has changed substantially with the change of orientation and enclosure of the porch. Because the house was constructed much earlier than the barn, they do not form a cohesive unit that conveys a distinct form of agricultural practice. Numerous intact farmsteads with substantial collections of outbuildings remain in Baltimore County. For example, listed farmsteads in the Long Green Valley contain buildings associated with dairy farming, and properties in southern Maryland often contain tobacco barns, indicating the historic farming practice.

The land surrounding the house and barn are not actively being farmed, and the parcel is surrounded by dense suburban development, including recently constructed houses that impact views to and from the property. The house and barn located at 9925 Bird River Road are not architecturally significant and are not eligible under Criterion C.

The property was not evaluated under Criterion D.

#### Key References:

Baltimore County

#### MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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## NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

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**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

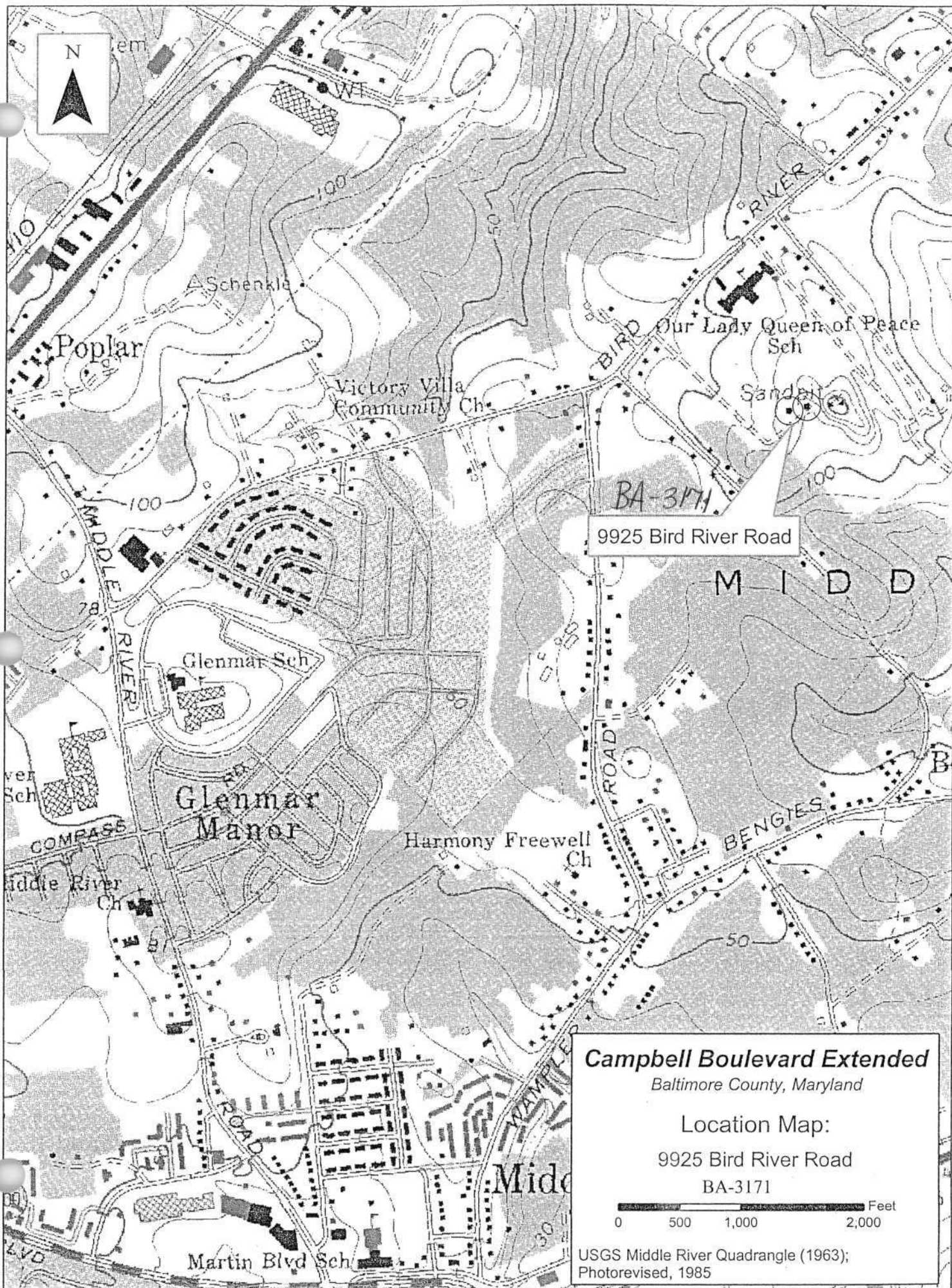
Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

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Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**Campbell Boulevard Extended**

Baltimore County, Maryland

Location Map:

9925 Bird River Road

BA-3171

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

USGS Middle River Quadrangle (1963);  
Photorevised, 1985



BA-3171

Spiegel Farm - 9925 Bird River Rd.

Baltimore County, MD

S Street

11/2004

MD SHPO

view to the north - house

1/8

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BA -3171

Spiegel Farm - 9925 Bird River Rd.

Baltimore County, MD

S Street

11/2004

MD SHPD

View to the east-house

2/8

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BA-3171

Spiegel Farm - 9925 Bird River Rd.

Baltimore County, MD

S Street

11/2004

MD SHPD

View to the NW - house

3/8

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BA-3171

Spiegel Farm - 9925 Bird River Rd,  
Baltimore County, MD

S Street

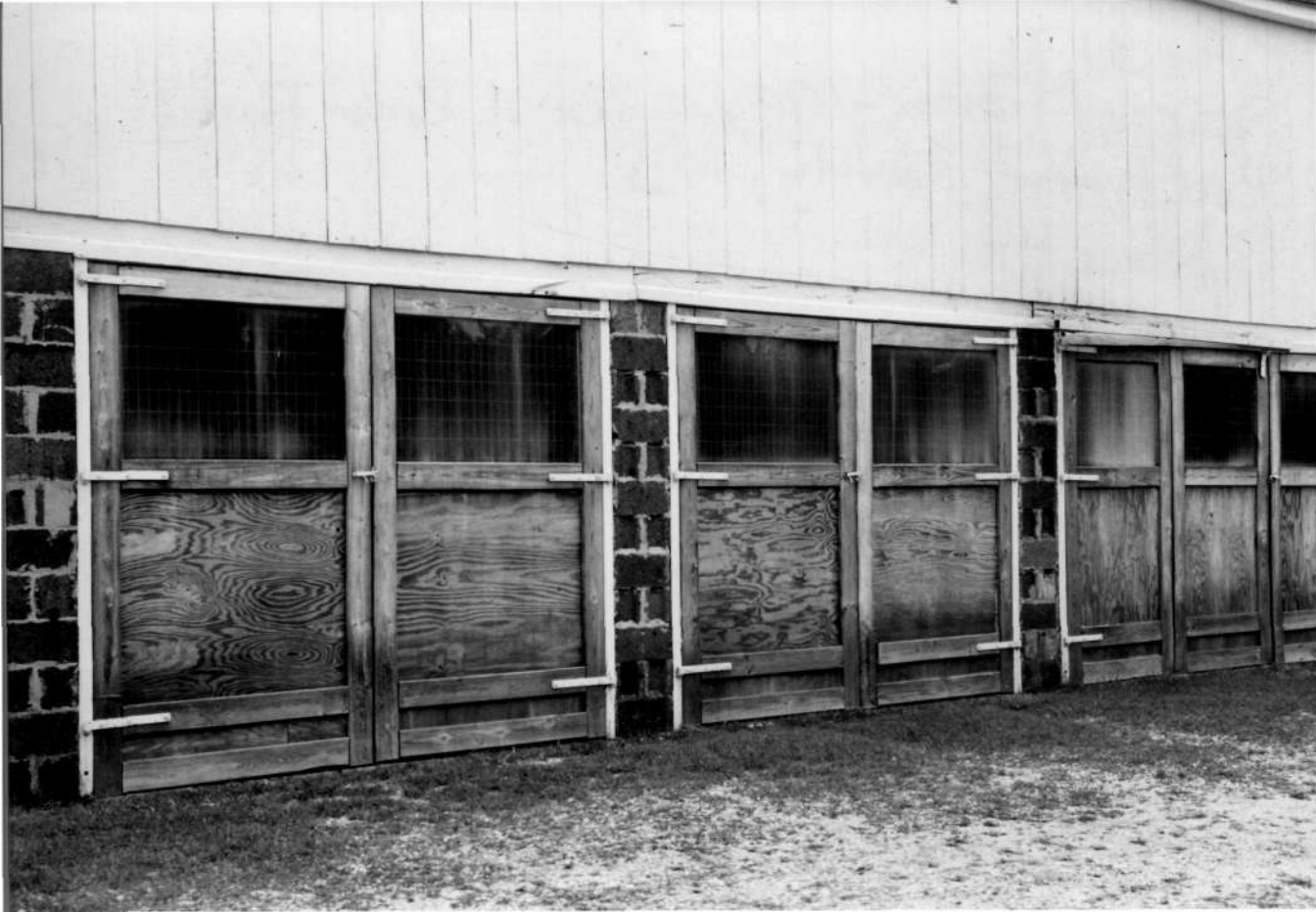
11/2004

MD SHPO

Barn - view to the north

4/8

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BA-3171  
Spiegel Farm - 9925 Bird River Road  
Baltimore County, MD  
S Streett  
11/2004  
MD SHPO

Detail of doors  
5/8

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BA-3171  
Spiegel Farm - 9925 Bird River Rd.  
Baltimore County, MD  
S Streett  
11/2004  
MD SHPO  
View to the west  
6/8

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BA -3171

Spiegel Farm -9925 Bird River Rd.

Baltimore County, MD

S Street

11/2004

MD SHPO

View to the South

7/8

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BA-3171

Spiegel Farm - 9925 Bird River Road  
Baltimore County, MD

S Streett

11/2004

MD SHPO

View of landscape to the  
NW

8/8

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